



**Blue Ribbon Task Force Members
February 1, 2006**

My name is Mary Webb, I've lived in Cambria for 20 years and I've been a sports fisherman for 40 years. I love to fish – I love to catch fish and eat fish. I love being on the water, whether in the ocean, on a river or around a lake. I grew up fishing for rainbow trout in Colorado and Oregon, and have fished up and down the California Coast. I know and have fished with many local fishermen out of Morro Bay, Cambria and San Simeon. In fact, I ended up marrying one of these local fishermen. These are all good, decent people who also love to fish and I consider most of these people our friends. But we have a problem....

I am also a conservationist, and yes, you can be both a fisherman and a conservationist. It used to be that all sports fishermen were conservationists! As a fisherman I soon realized that I had to travel further and further to find large lingcod. As my skills improved it became increasingly difficult to find big fish. Even the party boats were traveling further up the coast to get good size fish. Short-range trips became long-range trips and long-range trips became overnight trips. When the groundfish disaster was declared we were dismayed to hear that some of the rockfish populations had dropped to 10% of their original numbers.

There are lots of debates about restricting peoples so called “right to fish” but do we have “rights” to the fish? When my brothers come to California to visit – shouldn't there be some fish in the ocean for them to catch? When the divers go underwater don't they have a “right” to see an abundance of Marine Life? I believe it is a privilege to be able to fish and we have a responsibility to protect that privilege. Don't the fish have a “right” to exist as a species? As a sportsman, concerned about the future of marine resources, I am very much in favor of this new approach to fishery management based on ecosystems rather than trying to regulate fisheries species by species.

I'm also Vice-President of Greenspace- the Cambria Land Trust. As a conservationist, I am someone who appreciates and supports the terrestrial parks that currently exist. I think that the people who established them acted with foresight – where would we be today without Yosemite Park, Sequoia National Park, Pfeiffer Burns, or Joshua Tree? These parks were hotly debated and contested at the time and now they stand as a source of pride and recreation for all. Some parks were established to preserve unusual specimens such as old

growth redwoods or bristle cone pines. But more often, they were established to protect and preserve, unique and irreplaceable land formations including waterfalls, caves and rocks, meadows and watersheds. Just imagine that similar unique habitats exist underwater – these are the places that need to be set aside for ecosystem protection. Deep submarine canyons, deep rocky reefs, giant kelp forests and underwater plumes all provide the best habitat for marine life.

Greenspace board has voted in support of Package #2 as it provides the best protection for the future of our oceans health. I hope that if you come up with a preferred alternative, it will closely resemble that package.

Thank you all for the huge effort that has gone into this process.

**Mary Webb, V.P.
Greenspace- The Cambria Land Trust**